

2005 SUMMER



# Senior Update

*Serving the 37th District*

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Dear Friend:

As your state senator, I have come into contact with many people throughout the 37th district who have diverse opinions, ideas, and concerns. Among these people, I talk to many seniors. In particular, I am aware of the need for senior-friendly tax procedures for those who fill out paper income tax returns, as well as the option to defer the due date of summer taxes. Information on these issues and others are in this update.

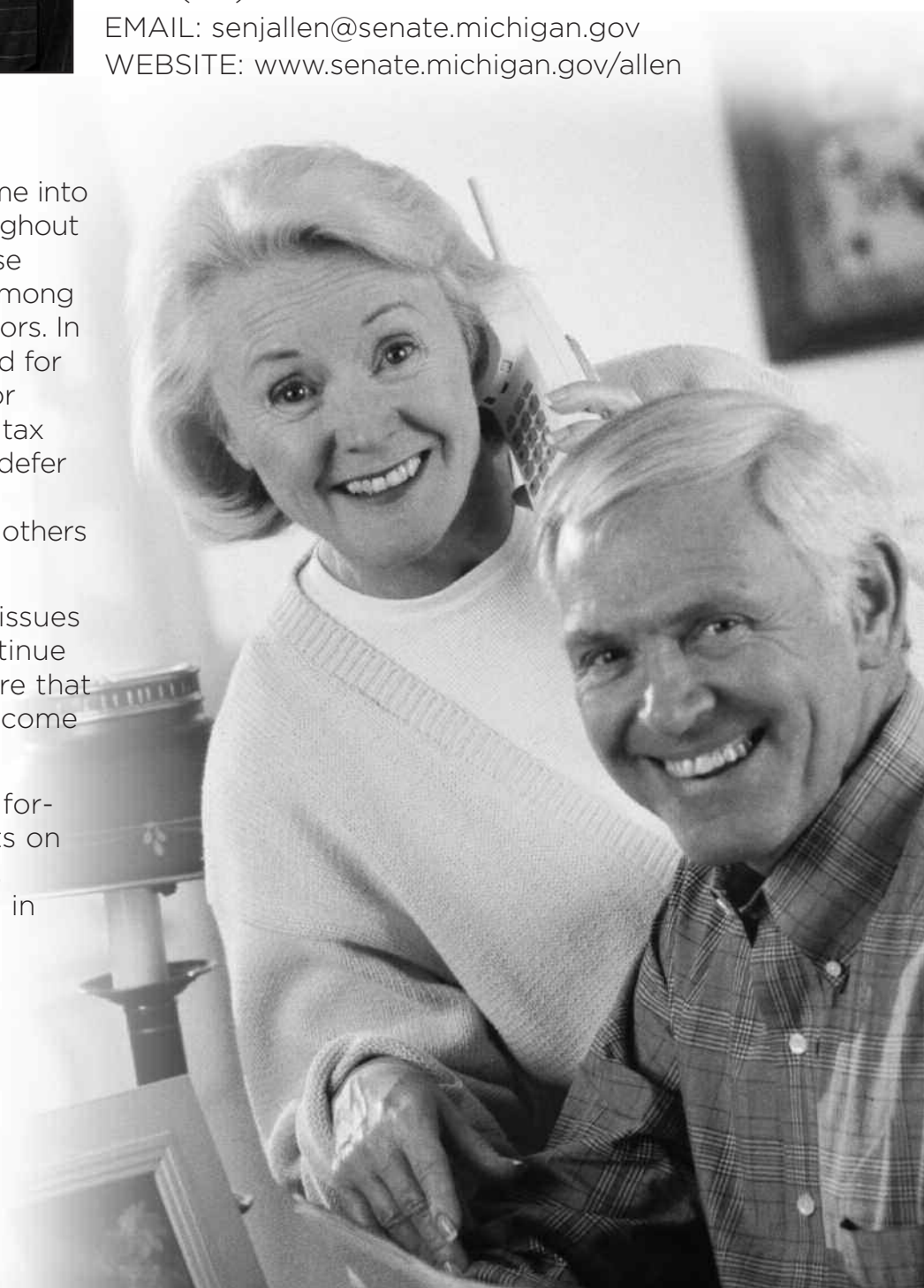
I am pleased to say that these issues are being addressed, and I continue to work on your behalf to ensure that important senior-related items come to successful resolutions.

Please know that I always look forward to hearing your comments on issues that matter most to you. I hope you find the information in this senior update helpful.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jason Allen".

Jason Allen  
State Senator



# Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care

A durable power of attorney for health care is a legally recognized document through which you can appoint another person, (called a patient advocate) to make medical treatment and related personal care decisions on your behalf. Your patient advocate could be a spouse, an adult close friend or other individual. You should

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choose someone you can trust to handle such a responsibility and who is willing to serve as your patient advocate. (Your advocate must be at least 18 years old.)

Your patient advocate can make decisions only if you are determined to be medically unable to take part in medical treatment decisions. Examples of such inability include: unconsciousness, serious confusion, delusion, or dementia.

A Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care allows your patient advocate to make decisions on your behalf, such as:

- Consent or refusal to receive medical treatment;
- Arranging for home health care/day care;
- Admittance to a nursing home/home for the aged;
- Organizing medical and personal care services and payment for those services, using your funds.

A patient advocate does not have the power to handle all your property and finances. To do so requires other legal documents, which should be prepared with the

help of an attorney. It is important to remember that a patient advocate does not have the authority to withhold or withdraw medical treatment if it is likely to cause your death, unless you have specifically given the patient advocate such optional authority to make such life and death decisions on your behalf, in your Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care.

If you would like a copy of the Peace of Mind booklet, which includes further information on the Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care, please contact my office at **1-866-525-5637** or [senjallen@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:senjallen@senate.michigan.gov).

## Have You Considered Working as a Precinct Inspector?

If you are interested in helping your community, you may want to become a precinct inspector. A precinct inspector is paid to assist voters at the polls on Election Day.

To be eligible, you must be a registered voter of the city or township and not a vote challenger, candidate for office, a member of a candidate's immediate family, or a member of the local Board of Canvassers. Anyone convicted of a felony or an elections crime is not allowed to serve.

If you are interested in applying, please contact your city or township clerk for more information.

# Order Free *Annual Credit Report*

To prevent Michigan residents from becoming victims of identity theft, credit reports can now be obtained once a year at no charge. To obtain a copy of your report, go online to [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com) or call toll-free **1-877-322-8228**. There are other websites that offer free credit reports via the internet. Some of these can be fraudulent sites or lure people into scams. Use caution if you do not use **www.annualcreditreport.com**. Check out the Consumer Alert link on the right side of the Michigan Attorney General webpage at [www.michigan.gov/ag](http://www.michigan.gov/ag).

## Senior-friendly *Tax Measures*

Too often, those who file their state income tax returns using paper forms have found that their refunds take far longer to receive than electronic returns. This can be distressing, especially for seniors, who often depend on their returns to provide for necessary items such as prescription drugs, and to help pay their property taxes.

To assist seniors in receiving their refunds in a timely manner, legislation has been introduced that requires the state Department of Treasury to notify a taxpayer, within ten days, whose return is selected for manual review. The Treasury will also be required to include an

approximate time frame for the review and contact information for someone at the department who can assist the taxpayer with any questions.

Additional legislation has been introduced that will raise the income threshold, for people who qualify, to defer the due date of their summer taxes until February 15. Due to the recent date change to summer for collection of county taxes, many people have increased tax bills. Currently at \$25,000, the bill increases the allowable gross household income to \$35,000 in 2005 and eventually to \$40,000 in 2007.

## MEDICATION WALLET CARD...

This business sized card is great for keeping track of important medical information and can fit right in your wallet... **just cut on the dotted line and fold!**



### *Important Numbers for Seniors*

Area Agency on Aging of  
Northwest Michigan .....1-800-442-1713  
Medicare .....1-800-633-4227  
AARP .....1-800-424-3410  
Michigan Long Term Care  
Ombudsman Program .....1-866-485-9393  
Legal Hotline for Seniors ...1-800-347-5297  
Social Security .....1-800-772-1213  
Taxpayer Assistance  
(State) .....1-800-487-7000  
Utilities (Public Service  
Commission) .....1-800-292-9555  
Consumers Energy Winter  
Protection Program .....1-800-477-5050  
Veterans' Information  
and Assistance .....1-800-827-1000  
Citizens for Better Care .....1-800-292-7852  
Together Rx Card .....1-800-865-7211

### *Important Questions to Ask your Health Care Providers:*

What is the name of this medicine and what is it supposed to do?  
How and when do I take it and for how long?  
Are there any foods, drinks, or other medicines or activities I should avoid while taking this medicine?  
What are the possible side effects and what should I do if they occur?  
Will this prescription work safely with the other medicines I'm taking (including nonprescription medicines)?

### **KNOWLEDGE is the BEST MEDICINE**



**PROVIDED BY  
STATE SENATOR JASON ALLEN**

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## RECEIVE E-LEGISLATIVE UPDATES!

If you would like to receive periodic legislative updates via email, please send a short note to [senjallen@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:senjallen@senate.michigan.gov)

## MEDICATION WALLET CARD

Make sure to write down your important information on the lines provided!



PERSONAL MEDICAL DATA	MY MEDICAL CONDITION INCLUDES:	MY CURRENT MEDICINES INCLUDE:
For _____ (name)	<input type="checkbox"/> Abnormal EKG _____	_____
_____ (Parent or Guardian if minor)	<input type="checkbox"/> Angina _____	_____
_____ (address)	<input type="checkbox"/> Arthritis _____	_____
_____ (city, state, zip)	<input type="checkbox"/> Cancer _____	_____
_____ (emergency contact phone)	<input type="checkbox"/> Depression _____	_____
_____ (Doctor name)	<input type="checkbox"/> Diabetes _____	_____
_____ (Doctor phone)	<input type="checkbox"/> Epilepsy _____	<b>I AM ALLERGIC TO:</b>
_____ (Pharmacy)	<input type="checkbox"/> Hearing Impairment _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Aspirin _____
	<input type="checkbox"/> Heart Condition _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Antibiotics _____
	<input type="checkbox"/> Hemodialysis _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Codeine _____
	<input type="checkbox"/> High Blood Pressure _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Insect Bites _____
	<input type="checkbox"/> Pacemaker _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Food _____
	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual Impairment _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	

For more information on living healthier in Michigan visit: [www.michigan.gov/mdch](http://www.michigan.gov/mdch)

